

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2180
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AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY
AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY
CINCPAC PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: TALKS YIELD BASIC ELECTION FORMULA

REF: ISLAMABAD 5908

1. THE SUBCOMMITTEE COMPRISED OF FINANCE MINISTER
HAFEEZ PRIZADA AND PNA SECRETARY GENERAL PROFESSOR GHAFOOR
AHMED REPORTEDLY WORKED OUT THE DETAILS OF A BASIC ELECTION
FORMULA ON JUNE 8. SPEAKING TO THE PRESS AFTER THE
MEETING, PIRZADA SAID THE SUBCOMMITTEE WOULD FORMALLY
REPORT ITS FINDINGS TO THE PLENARY NEGOTIATING SESSION
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SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 9.

2. PNA PRESIDENT MUFTI MAHMUD TOLD THE PRESS THAT MANY
THINGS, INCLUDING VARIOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES, REMAIN
TO BE DECIDED. FOOLPROOF ARRANGEMENTS TO PREVENT ELECTION
IRREGULARITIES ARE ESSENTIAL, HE STATED. IN A STATEMENT
ISSUED AFTER THE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING, PROFESSOR GHAFOOR

ADVISED THE PUBLIC TO AVOID SPECULATING ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THE TALKS. HE ASSURED THE PEOPLE THAT THE PNA WAS MAKING A SINCERE EFFORT TO RESOLVE THE PRESENT CRISIS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR WISHES AND SENTIMENTS, ADDING THAT THE FULL FACTS WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC AFTER THE TALKS ARE COMPLETED.

3. AIR MARSHAL ASGHAR KHAN, ADDRESSING THE DISTRICT BAR ASSOCIATION IN PESHAWAR ON JUNE 8, EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE OVER BY THE END OF THE WEEK. HOWEVER, HE WARNED AGAIN THAT AMOVEMENT WOULD BE LAUNCHED AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT IF THE TALKS WERE ALLOWED TO FAIL. ASKED IF AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION MIGHT BE REQUIRED, HE REPORTEDLY SAID THAT HE IS NOT ADVERSE TO CHANGES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRESENT DIALOGUE. THE OBJECT OF THE TALKS, HE NOTED, IS TO FIND OUT IF BHUTTO IS INTERESTED IN HOLDING FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS. HE CALLED PROPAGANDA ABOUT FOREIGN INTERFERENCE "SHAMEFUL", CLAIMING THE GOVERNMENT WAS TRYING TO BLACKMAIL THE OPPOSITION.

4. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPOTS, PROFESSOR GHAFOR AND MUFTI MAHMUD MET WITH THE KUWAIT AND SAUDI AMBASSADORS ON JUNE 8 TO INFORM THEM ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE SAUDI ENVOY LATER TOLD A BBC NORRESPONDENT THAT THE TALKS ARE PROGRESSING SATISFACTORILY. BOTH PARTIES, HE SAID, ARE KEEPING HIM WELL INFORMED. HE NOTED THAT HE REPORTS DAILY TO KING KHALID, FROM WHOM HE CONTINUES TO RECEIVE IN TRUCTIONS ABOUT THE TALKS.

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5. THE CAUTIONARY STATEMENTS BY MUFTI AND GHAFOR SUGGEST THAT THE PNA IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE UNBRIDLED OPTIMISTIC TONE OF PUBLIC SPECULATION SURROUNDING THE TALKS. THE OPPOSITION IS IMPLYING THAT THE TALKS ARE GOING WELL BUT POTENTIALLY DIFF CULT DETAILS REMAIN TO BE WORKED OUT. PRO-OPPOSITION COLUMNIST Z.A. SULERI, COMMENTING IN JANG ON JUNE 8, SAID A DEFINIITIVE SETTLEMENT HAS NOT YET BEEN REACHED. MANY PAKISTANI JOURNALISTS AND SOME MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT AN AGREEMENT WILL EMERGE BY THIS WEEKEND. OTHERS, HOWEVER, STILL BELIEVE THAT MORE TIME MAY BE REQUIRED. NEITHER SIDE HAS ACCUSED THE OTHER OF BAD FAITH AT THE BARGAINING TABLE, AND BOTH APPEAR DETERMINED TO WORK OUT A COMHROMISE.
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